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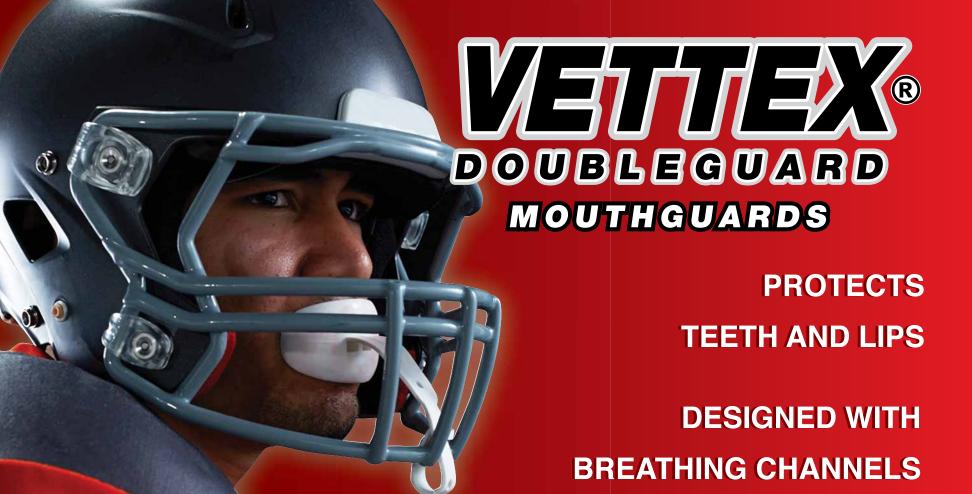




# FOOTBALL BASKETBALL ATHLETIC







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WHO DEVELOPED THE C-FLAP? BELOW IS AN INTERVIEW THAT FIRST APPEARED IN JUNIOR BASEBALL MAGAZINE TALKING TO THE FOUNDER OF C-FLAP- DR. ROBERT CROW.

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**Junior Baseball:** Although many of our readers may have seen the protective flap used before, can you describe the basic design and benefit for the unaware?

**Dr. Robert Crow:** C-Flap is a faceguard made of Lexan (a strong polycarbonate) with a foam pad attached to the inner surface and is color matched to the baseball helmet. It attaches to the ear flap on the side of the players helmet facing the pitcher and extends over the cheek and jaw.

**JB:** What was your original inspiration for developing the C-Flap?

**RC:** I am a Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon and served as one of the team physicians for the Atlanta Braves for twenty-six years. During this time I treated a number of players with facial injuries. Following reconstruction it was my hope to have a device that would give some protection to the injured area when the player returned to the game. Full faceguards were available but players found that they interfered with their ability to see a pitched ball and also covered their mouths. Because of these concerns I developed C-Flap. This guard is a unilateral guard which extended from the ear flap on the side of the batter's helmet facing the pitcher. It was made so that it did not interfere with vision or cover the mouth.

**JB:** How was the C-Flap initially received by the baseball community when it was first developed?

**RC:** Prototypes were initially designed and presented to many professional players for their comments and suggestions. Acceptance was initially slow but once a few players tried the guard and became comfortable with it, they began to use it. When youth players and coaches, as well as parents saw it in use they too began to use it. Today it is employed by multiple youth and minor league teams as well as by more and more professionals.

**JB:** As the modern sports world has become more educated about head injuries (i.e. concussions), have you seen an increase in the willingness and utilization of the C-Flap by players?

**RC:** C-Flap was designed to provide some protection to the periorbital area (bones around the eye) and the jaw. It does not provide any additional protection to the head.

**JB:** C-Flap is but one of a number of new safety devices to hit the market in recent years. Why do you think there's been an increase here? What about the game has changed?

More players (both youth and professional) are beginning to use C-Flap...

**RC:** C-Flap was developed in the 80's and has been available for use for more than 30 years. Other safety equipment has been available to protect against other injuries that have become more prevalent. In my opinion, the game of baseball has not changed in concept but players are being trained and conditioned better.

**JB:** Early in the 2017 MLB season, Milwaukee Brewers outfielder Keon Broxton, who was wearing the C-Flap at the time, was struck in the face by a fastball while batting. He later told reporters that the protective gear "saved my life" and urged his professional peers to give the C-Flap design a chance. Do you think scary encounters such as this one will drive more big league players (and subsequently youth players) to try C-Flap out?

**RC:** More players (both youth and professional) are beginning to use C-Flap because they have seen it in use and found it does not interfere with their ability to see a pitched ball or cover their mouths. It is lightweight, and it appears as an extension of the helmet rather than an attachment. Continued use by both youth and professional players will hopefully encourage others to incorporate it and in turn reduce the number of facial injuries.

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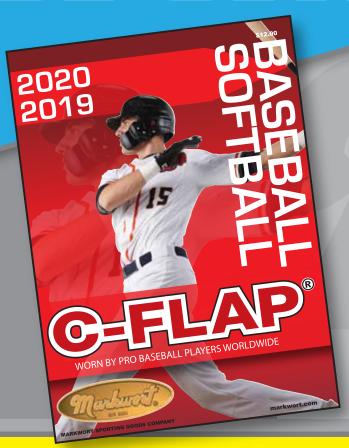
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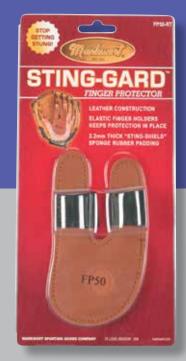
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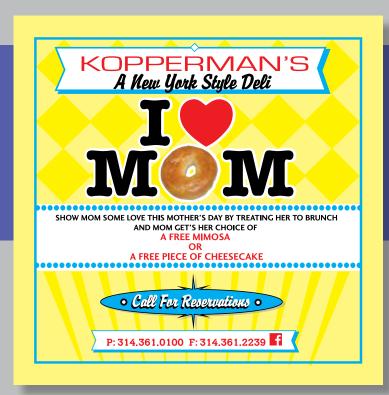












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